

REMARKS

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the very thorough consideration given the present application.

Claims 1 and 3-16 are now present in this application. Claims 1 and 10 are independent. Claim 1 has been amended. Claims 2 and 17 have been canceled.

Reconsideration of this application, as amended, is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 10-16 are allowed, and that claims 2-9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for the indication of allowable subject matter. Allowable claim 2 has been canceled, and the limitations thereof have been included in independent claim 1. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims 1 and 3-16 are now in condition for allowance.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Wachi. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

A complete discussion of the Examiner's rejection is set forth in the Office Action, and is not being repeated here.

While not conceding the appropriateness of the Examiner's rejection, but merely to advance prosecution of the instant application, Applicants have canceled rejected claim 17 and incorporated the limitations of allowable claim 2 into rejected independent claim 1. Therefore, this rejection has been rendered moot.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested.

III. Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicant therefore respectfully requests that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding rejections and that they be withdrawn. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and as such, the present application is in condition for allowance.

If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone James T. Eller, Jr., Registration No. 39,538, at (703) 205-8000, in the Washington, D.C. area.

Application No.: 09/930,466
Art Unit 2653

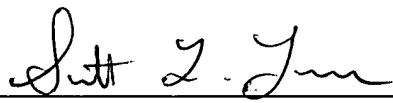
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Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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